3 d. Ed.

21

THE INDEPENDENT.

A NOVEL.

Neſciat iraſci, cupiat nihil; et potiores
Herculis ærumnas credat, ſævoſque labores,
Et Venere, et cœnis, et plumis Sardanapali.

JUVENAL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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21

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

PREFACE.

CONJUGAL infidelity hath deſervedly been condemned by the Moraliſts of every enlightened age. The depravity of affections which muſt precede and accompany it, and the fatal effects which it infallibly produces, cannot fail of exciting the pity and indignation of every virtuous and feeling heart. Legiſlators, philoſophers, and poets, have teſtified their abhorrence of this baneful vice, and exerted their power to baniſh it from the ſocieties of men.

THESE appearances are conſtant and uniform; and any writers whoſe example ſeems to contradict them, will either be found men of little pretenſions to good taſte and ſenſibility, or men who have themſelves condemned their looſe performances.

The abandoned conduct of many perſons in diſtinguiſhed life, has of late given ample field for exertions of this kind; and that field has not been unoccupied. The Divine, the Satyriſt, and even the Noveliſt, have drawn their pens, and entered the liſts againſt this hateful enemy of domeſtic peace. It is only the atchievements of the laſt claſs, that I am intitled, as a brother, to examine.

THEY

THEY ſeem to me to have failed, from attempting too much. By exceſſive overloaded pathos, they diſſolve that deluſive charm of reality, which ought to hold the mind, during the peruſal of any work of fiction. Grief after grief is poured in; and every page exhibits ſome mercileſs ſtroke of tragic genius: ſo that, before the middle of the narrative, the heart is wearied and torn with diſtreſs; and the underſtanding, ſtepping in to its aid, repreſents the whole as a diſguſting and unprofitable tale *.

* In a ſimilar caſe, the ſame opinion is given by a great critic of antiquity: "Nunquem tamen debet eſſe longa miſeratio; nec

ſine

ALMOST any writer may extort tears; but every reader will distinguish between the tear of torture and the tear of delight. He will throw away the volume, never more to be lifted, which, by a tedious accumulation of mournful incidents, wrings from his eyes some bitter drops; while he will read a thousand times the pages, and bless as often their author, wherein, by magic touches, and by nameless

fine causa dictum est, *Nihil facilius quam lachrymas marescere*. Nam cum etiam veros dolores mitiget tempus, citius evanescat necesse est illa quam dicendo effinximus imago: in qua si moramur, lachrymis fatigatur auditor, et requiescit, et ab illo quem cæperat impetu, ad rationem redit. QUINTIL. *l.* vi. *cap.* 1.

leſs energies, his feelings are in a moment excited to give delightful expreſſions either of mirth or of wo.

SENSIBLE of this, the author of the following piece has modelled it on a different plan, and held out the violator of matrimonial faith as an object of ridicule. Not that he imagines vice can ever be made ridiculous,—but certainly its votaries may; and (to uſe the words of Sterne) "ſuch frolickſome ſtrokes" as attempt to make them ſo,—"though huſſar-like they ſkirmiſh lightly and out of all order, are ſtill auxiliaries on the ſide of Virtue."

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THE

THE INDEPENDENT.

CHAP. I.

AN UNCOMMON INCIDENT IN HIGH LIFE.

IT was between five and six in a fine summer morning, when Lord Fanfare, yawning, leapt from his bed;

and, for the firſt time in his life, beheld "the ſun from the eaſt tipping the mountains with gold."

—Gentle critic, throw not aſide the book, nor exclaim, in the pride of thy ſagacity,—Fy, what ſtuff is here! we are likely to be much edified by a tale which begins with an incident altogether out of nature! Where did this wiſe author hear of a lord riſing at ſuch a time o'day?

Good Sir, I pray you, damn me not unheard. I think I can make the matter pretty plain, if you will grant me this,—that it is better to riſe,

riſe, even at an untimely hour, than to lie tumbling and toſſing about like a pudding on the coals. The nobleman I ſpoke of had his ſpirit perturbed by three diſtreſſes; any one of which was ſufficient to bereave him of ſleep. Firſt, he was in love; ſecondly, he was in debt; and, thirdly, he had the toothach. The fair object of his love was a certain lady of admirable beauty, extenſive influence, and unbounded power in the polite world. I uſe this paraphraſtic deſignation, in compliance with the chaſtity and refinement of modern writing; for ſome authors, who flouriſhed fifty years ago, would have laco-

nically ſtyled her——*an illuſtrious whore:* but Heaven forbid that I ſhould ſhock the tender-hearted ſentimental reader, by ſuch harſh, obſcene, abominable phraſes.

This nymph reigning tyrant of Lord Fanfare's heart, he had gone, four days before this morning of his early riſing, to wait on her; and generouſly offered her twenty-five pounds a-week, together with the uſe of a chariot and a ſet of geldings, for the excluſive privilege of entering her bed-chamber when and how he pleaſed. She *bluſhed* conſent mighty prettily; and a rapturous kiſs had juſt

ſealed

ſealed the bargain, when in ſtaggered Lord Pottle, chinking a long large purſe, and ſwearing that no man ſhould outbid him. Being informed of Lord Fanfare's ſettlement, he, without heſitation, offered to double it. The charmer ruſhed into his arms. What elſe could be expected?

Pottle, in token of joy, inſtantly knocked a ſuperb mirror into ten thouſand pieces; and taking his progreſs through the houſe, demoliſhed an hundred and fifty pounds worth of china ere he ſtinted.

Lord Fanfare, overwhelmed with grief, made the beſt of his way to the next coffeehouſe; where, meeting his friend Colonel Whynyard, he revealed his diſgrace, and craved conſolation. The colonel propoſed hazard. Content, quoth my Lord.—Down they ſat; and before midnight, this luckleſs nobleman had loſt five thouſand pounds.

Inexpreſſibly vexed at this bad run, he went home almoſt frantic; reflecting, to aggravate his miſery, that he could not at preſent diſcharge the debt, having lately expended all his ready caſh in the purchaſe of an elegant

gant new country-ſeat. For that ſeat, therefore, to avoid the colonel's dunning face, he ſet off next morning, with his lady and his ſiſter: and after dragging out there two inſipid days and reſtleſs nights, he roſe, as aforeſaid, between five and ſix in a fine ſunny morning.

CHAP. II.

A MORNING WALK.

HAVING, with much ringing, rouſed his valet, he began to doff his night equipage; the moſt notable part of which was ten pretty little caps of green velvet (like thoſe made by the taylor of Barataria), ſerving for caſes to his lily-white fingers:—an original invention of his; by which he boaſted to outſhine his wife, or any lady in the land, in whiteneſs and delicacy of finger.

After

After undergoing ſeveral operations, which I am not at liberty to divulge, a ſtrange whim ſeized him, of walking forth in the morning dew: and out he ſallied, like an Indian prince, his valet bearing an umbrella over his head. Imagine to yourſelf a tall, meagre, *aged youth*, of a milk-and-water complection, and lack-luſtre eye, arrayed in a looſe robe of pink ſattin lined with furs, a cap of the ſame, black velvet veſt and breeches, white ſilk hoſe, and red ſlippers;—then you ſee Lord Fanfare.

Slowly he tottered along to the ſun-

ny

ny ſide of a terrace in his garden; where, ſeating himſelf in a chair, he baſked his emaciated limbs in the morning ray.

The view before him was charming: A ſweet narrow valley, watered by a winding ſtream, variegated with fields of corn and graſſy meadows, clumps of trees and lofty hedge-rows, a church and a village, and bounded by a range of gently-ſwelling hills crowned with verdure; all ſmiling under the oblique beams of the riſing ſun.

Over this ſcene Lord Fanfare caſt his

his eyes without emotion. Inſenſible to the charms of nature, to all the raviſhing beauties of earth and ſky, his heart was only occupied by the mercenary caprice of his miſtreſs and his deep debt of honour.

As he ſat thus, in fretful mood, the ſound of wild muſic aroſe from a field in the valley. What can this be? ſaid Lord Fanfare.

'Pon mi vard, replied La Fleche the valet, je ne ſcai pas. Mais peut-etre—may be—Monſieur Vittington may tell a mi Lor. Dere he come —voila—

This

This was a man of law, named *Whittington*, ſteward to Lord Fanfare, who had bought for him this new eſtate; through which he was now taking his morning ride with great delight, reflecting on that triumphant day, wherein he hoped (by a ſecret proceſs well known to modern ſtewards) to make it his own. Lord Fanfare ſtood up, and halloo'd to the lawyer; but his feeble voice was drowned in the noiſe of the linnets, larks, and other ſong-birds that filled the air. La Fleche attempted the like, but in vain; he being alſo a perſon of weak lungs. Whittington all the while was trundling on at his eaſe,

eaſe, undiſturbed by their ſcreams, till at length the waving of the umbrella caught his eye, and he made towards them with his beſt ſpeed.

Whittington, ſaid the peer, do you know what muſic that is?

Perfectly well, my Lord, replied the lawyer; it is a pipe and fiddle playing to Mr Woodville's hay-makers.

Who is that Woodville? ſaid Lord Fanfare. Are not all theſe grounds mine?

They

They are not, 'pleaſe your Lordſhip, anſwered Whittington. That fine rich farm of the valley lies in the very middle of your eſtate; and no ſum could tempt the proprietor Mr Woodville to give it up. He is an odd young man; and ſometimes, I think, hardly *compos*,—'pleaſe your Lordſhip. I offered him no leſs than forty years purchaſe. He ſaid, he expected to live fifty years; and therefore would be a loſer by that bargain.

Why did you not acquaint him with my rank and fortune? ſaid Lord Fanfare.

I did, my Lord, quoth Whittington; and he then ſpoke irreverently: ſaying, that he would not ſell a ſingle furrow to pleaſe the vanity of any mortal; and that he would maintain his INDEPENDENT STATE in the very midſt of your deſpotic kingdom.—*Imperium in imperio*—as the canoniſts phraſe it—'pleaſe your Lordſhip—ha, ha, ha!

The devil he did! cried the peer. And muſt I have my privacies diſturbed by a pert gentleman-farmer? Shall a bluſtering beef-and-ale yeoman live under my noſe, to plague and peſter me at his pleaſure with

pipe

pipe and fiddle?——I'll go to him myſelf, and awe him ſo with my quality, that he will offer me his lands at my own price.—But, hark'ee, Whittington, I want five thouſand—inſtantly—a very urgent buſineſs——

My Lord—hem, hem—really caſh was never ſo hard to be got—premiums high—ſecurities difficult——But, *ſi quid eſt in Whittington*——nothing ſhall be wanting on my part.

Muttering theſe wiſe ſentences of doubt and demur, he pointed out the road to the muſical haymakers; and

and wiſhing his Lord a ſucceſsful negociation with Mr Woodville, he made his bows, and rode on.

CHAP. III.

IN WHICH THE INDEPENDENT APPEARS.

SLOW down the green lane Lord Fanfare marched, leaning on the ſhoulder of La Fleche, and entered the fragrant field; where ſportive Mirth was ſmoothing the brow of Toil; the lads and laſſes, ardent at their taſk, ſpreading the ſwathe to the breeze; the ſkilful minſtrels, ſeated at the root of a tree, delighted and delighting with their ruſtic duet; and the maſter, with his approving ſmiles,

ſmiles, and familiar jokes, cheering the whole.

He ſtood leaning careleſsly on a hay-rake: A figure—not, ladies, like thoſe harmleſs pretty perſonages who amble with you at balls and ridottos, whom you handle and trifle with as indifferently as with your monkeys, —of which ſpecies they are but a variety——No—the appearance of my WOODVILLE in a ball-room would have ſet all your dear hearts a-galloping.——Think you ſee him leaning on his rake, tall and graceful, with limbs of ſtrength and elegance, a pictureſque countenance, blooming

with the complection of a milk-maid, black piercing eyes, and dark-brown hair falling in curls, which were either natural, or ſeemed to be ſo.

The arrival of ſo ſtrange a phenomenon as Lord Fanfare aſtoniſhed all the field. The muſic ceaſed,—the hay-makers bleſſed themſelves;—— Woodville alone remained unmoved, ſinging, *Come Roger and Nell*, &c.

Lord Fanfare beckoned him aſide; and ſaid, pointing to the minſtrels, Do theſe fellows play at your requeſt?

That

They do, my Lord, ſaid Woodville :—they are my muſicians in ordinary.

I am ſurpriſed, Sir, cried the peer, how you can have the audacity to raiſe ſuch vile noiſes ſo near the incloſures of a man of quality!

Woodville. I'm ſorry they offend you, heartily, my Lord; but, for my part, I ſee no way of avoiding it.

Lord Fanfare. 'Sdeath, Sir, muſt I have my brains rent with your curſed ſcreaming and ſqueaking——

Woodville. By no means, my Lord; there is nothing eaſier than to prevent that. If you cannot find as much cotton as will ſtop your ears, you may ſurround your gardens with a wall, whoſe top ſhall reach to heaven; and within that enjoy your own amuſements, undiſturbed by the ſports of us poor ruſtics who inhabit the humble vale.

Lord Fanfare. No, Sir; I can take another way; I can buy your farm.

Woodville. Not unleſs I chooſe to ſell it.

Lord Fanfare. But, Sir, I ſay you cannot chooſe to deny any thing to a perſon of my quality.

Woodville. Never fear that, my good Lord. Quality is no word of conjuration with me. I grant, indeed, you are a LORD,—Heav'n and the King be prais'd!—but on this charming little FARM I am a PRINCE. Here I reign in rural ſtate——I wage war with kites and carrion-crows,—defend my territories from the inroads of plundering foxes,—and preſerve leagues of amity with the parſon and other neighbouring pacific potentates

—among whom I would be glad to number your Lordſhip.

Lord Fanfare. Sir, let me tell you, this language is pretty free. But I aſk you once for all, Will you ſell me your farm?

Woodville. I anſwer once for all—No. Not all the gold that ever was, is, or ſhall be, in your Lordſhip's coffers, could tempt me to forſake this dear ſpot. What is there in the power of gold to purchaſe which I need?—*No courtier can be ſo happy as we.*——Do you ſee theſe lads, my Lord, and theſe merry maidens?—they

they love me, and ſtrive who ſhall ſerve me beſt. Yon ſnug farm-houſe affords me peaceful ſhelter; and theſe grateful fields bleſs me with plenty. While ſlumbering under theſe ſhades in ſummer, I pine not for your Lordſhip's ſilken canopies;—nor, while ſporting by my hall-fire in the winter's night, do I ſigh for the glare of an opera or maſquerade.

Allons, mi Lor!—cried the valet, —dis be van poete!

He is the devil, I think, ſaid Lord Fanfare——Sir, I can't tell what to make of your inſolence, in perſiſting

to

to keep your poſſeſſion againſt my deſire, and to vex me eternally with your vulgarities.

I will continue, my Lord, replied Woodville, to live in my ordinary way; but with no intention to vex you. It is my wiſh rather that we might live in good neighbourhood. Bring, if you pleaſe, a whole battalion of led captains, and all the nymphs upon the *ton*, to dance in your drawing-room—I proteſt I will never fret a moment at it: And let me beg you not to be enraged when you ſee me dancing with my villagers on

on the green.——I ſhall always rejoice to behold your Lordſhip taking a walk in my grounds. So elegant a figure adds greatly to the beauty of the landſkip.——You have been early ſtirring to-day, my Lord. I hope your Lordſhip goes abroad by advice. I moſt humbly beſeech your Lordſhip to have a reverend care of your health——*Come Roger and Nell*, &c.——Play away, pipes and catgut—why ſit you dumb?

With ſuch an animated pace as a thief walks to the gallows, Lord Fanfare walked home.——He was greatly

greatly fatigued,—but his toothach was easier. He went to-bed again, and slept till noon.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

THE INDEPENDENT BEHAVES VERY ABSURDLY.

GETTING up, he found his lady and ſiſter Louiſa at breakfaſt; to whom he related minutely his morning excurſion, and repeated Mr Woodville's inſolent ſpeeches word for word, with a view of impreſſing on their minds an unfavourable idea of that youth. Unfortunately his deſcription had a contrary effect. They both in their hearts admired the ſpirit

of

of Woodville, and burnt with impatience to ſee him.

Under pretence, therefore, of taking an airing, Lady Fanfare ordered the chariot; and embarking therein with Lady Louiſa, drove ſtraight to the field; where, however, Woodville now was not. Hearing from his ſervants that he was gone home to dinner, thoſe gay ladies, without ceremony, whirled into the farm-yard, leapt from their vehicle, and tripped into Woodville's parlour, where he ſat earneſtly practiſing ſome new country-dances on his fiddle. The ruſtling of ſilks calling his attention, he

he ſurceaſed from his tuneful toil, and, turning, ſaw the ſiſters enter, all bright as angels new dropt from the ſky.

Shall I deſcribe them, reader?——There is nothing eaſier.

It is but turning up Fanny Goodwill, Sophy Weſtern, Emily Gauntlet, and two or three more ſuch, and rifling a competence of their moſt attractive charms; then ſhuffling thoſe together, you may draw out a new goddeſs, reſembling each, yet diſtinct from all.——But I rather chooſe the ſhort method, of requeſting you to conceive

conceive a pair of complete beauties, with all their exquiſite ſhapes and harmonious features—differing only from one another as the grape of the hot-houſe differs from the grape of the vineyard——Lady Fanfare ſomewhat lean and pale—Louiſa plump and blooming with the purple light of love——Not that ſhe was a clumſy moatled blowze, with an immutable daub of deep red on each cheek—no—the healthy ſuffuſion which inhabited there, though it could not itſelf think (like that of Donne's miſtreſs), yet held very cloſe intelligence with thought. One emotion would make it vaniſh; another would

ſpread

ſpread it with the rapidity of lightning over her neck and boſom.

This laſt change it palpably underwent, as Woodville threw down his violin, and turned to receive his viſitors; but whether or not the youth obſerved it, I cannot affirm.——Lady Fanfare addreſſed him with much formality,—hoping he would have the generoſity to forgive the impertinence of this viſit,—and do them the juſtice to believe that they thought themſelves happy in the proſpect of enjoying the acquaintance of Mr Woodville——regarding him all the while

with a ſpeaking look, in the leer of invitation.

Woodville calmly replied, that they were welcome; and that if it lay in the power of ſuch a man as he to do them ſervice, they might freely command him. This anſwer amazed the peereſs; for ſhe expected at leaſt two dozen bows, and a florid declaration of the immenſe honour which their preſence beſtowed on his poor cottage.

They ſat ſilent ſome minutes, Lady Louiſa keeping her eyes fixed on the ground,

ground, ſtill deep-bluſhing, and otherwiſe agitated.

We interrupted your muſic, Sir, ſaid Lady Fanfare;—will you be ſo good as favour us with an air?

Will your Ladyſhip be ſo good, quoth Woodville, as favour me with a hornpipe?

Lady Fanfare bit her lip.—Then taking up Giardini's firſt ſet of ſolos which lay on the deſk—theſe are pretty ſonatas, Sir—I dare ſay you play them well.

I'm ſure, quoth Woodville, your Ladyſhip dances divinely—A mighty pretty foot!

He then took his violin, and ran over *pizzicato*, the tune which he had been conning—ſhut the book—laid aſide the inſtrument—roſe—and took his hat.

You are for the field, I ſuppoſe, ſaid Lady Fanfare——We'll ſet you down.

Not before you take me up—ſaid Woodville—And with that he handed them, ſmiling, to the chariot—made

made a ſlight bow, and ſkipped away acroſs the fields.

Strange behaviour this, to be ſure! But let us hear the ladies' opinions of it as they drove away.

Lady Fanfare. Upon my word, this is the oddeſt fellow I ever ſaw. What think you, Louiſa?

Lady Louiſa. I don't know—I obſerved him little——His looks and behaviour diſguſted—ſhocked me.

Lady Fanfare. I thought ſo, my dear. I obſerved you confuſed.

Lady Louiſa. Confuſed! You did! Ha, ha!—Confuſed!——

Lady Fanfare. Nay, you certainly was ſo very much; and it did not ſurpriſe me, as I imputed it to another cauſe. So handſome a fellow might very naturally raiſe a flutter in the breaſt of a tender young virgin like my dear ſiſter.——But I'm glad he diſguſted you (though I can't conceive how); for, *entre nous*, I feel a ſtrong *penchant* for him myſelf.

Lady Louiſa. How, Madam!—— I would be ſorry that my brother heard you ſay ſo——

Lady

Lady Fanfare. Ha, ha!—my dear ſober ſeamſtreſs! my ſweet country-maiden!—Your aunt was a moſt ſenſible woman, I perceive;—and you have no doubt read good authors in your retirement—the Spectator, and Thomas à Kempis—and Pamela——Excellent authors! Ah! thou haſt known but little of Lord Fanfare, and leſs of me, and nothing at all of the world!——Why, my dear, your brother, ſo far from thwarting my inclinations, would, I dare ſay, be glad to promote ſuch an affair. He might turn it to good account. We have been married two years; and twenty

months ago we were heartily tired of each other.

Lady Louiſa. Heavins!

Lady Fanfare. The way of the world, my dear ſiſter.——Well, this Woodville is a charming fellow!

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THE INDEPENDENT BEHAVES STILL MORE ABSURDLY.

IT is natural to ſuppoſe, I think, that Lady Louiſa had ſeen Woodville before this notable interview; and the ſuppoſition is confirmed by what happened a few days thereafter. She had walked out one evening alone, grave and penſive, like Patience on a monument, and ſauntering along, ſhe knew nor cared not whither; at the corner of a hazel copſe,

copſe, ſhe popt upon Woodville, driving a cow before him with an elm branch, and whiſtling with all his might. He bowed to her reſpectfully, and was paſſing on.

Louiſa turned, burning with bluſhes.—There was a time, Mr Woodville, when you would not have paſſed me ſo coldly.

Woodville. How coldly, Madam! Give me leave to tell your Ladyſhip, that I think my bow was very well, conſidering that of late I have been much out of practice.

Lady

Lady Louiſa. At Cheveron-place, Mr Woodville, what would a formal bow have been?

Woodville. Your father, Madam, was not then an Earl. You were the charming, noble-minded, generous Louiſa! for whom I would have ſhed my heart's blood. You are now Lady Louiſa Fanfare—to whom I ſhall always endeavour to pay becoming reſpect.

Lady Louiſa. What change in my behaviour has given riſe to this fine diſtinction?

Wood-

Woodville. It belongs not to me to cenſure your Ladyſhip's behaviour. I hope I know myſelf better. I am a poor man—but mainly honeſt—and tolerably merry.

Lady Louiſa. Woodville, you uſe me very ill. This affected reſerve is but a ſad return for the confidence I once repoſed in you. If I were the mere lady of quality you think me, I would never more ſee nor ſpeak to you. But to convince you I am ſtill the ſame ſimple LOUISA, I beg to know what has induced you to break off all correſpondence with me, and to take up this ſtrange ſcheme of life,

ſo

ſo different from your former ideas of elegance?

Woodville. That is—I command you to relate your adventures. Madam, you ſhall be ſatisfied. Let me have the honour of ſeating your Ladyſhip on this bank of wild thyme.——I ſtand here before you, Madam, the wreck and woful ruin of a moſt accompliſhed fine gentleman;—or, if you pleaſe, a recovered fool. And tho' now, under the ſhade of melancholy boughs, I loſe and neglect the creeping hours of time, yet have I whilome looked on better days:

For

For I have been with dice-box knoll'd to ruin,
And known what 'tis to bubble and be bubbled.

I was hardly ſeventeen, when I received the agreeable news that my father had died ſuddenly in France, leaving me twenty thouſand pounds abſolutely at my own diſpoſal. I had never ſeen him from my infancy, when, upon my mother's death, he had gone abroad, and left my ſiſter and me under the tuition of our uncle; conſequently my grief could not be deep on this event.

I inſtantly commenced the man of gallantry, elegance, and idiotry; living as if I had been certain of receiving

ving another ſuch legacy at the end of every year. I forſook two or three ſenſible modeſt lads, with whom I uſed to ſpend my time uſefully and agreeably; and entered into a ſet of moſt egregious blockheads—knights, eſquires, and honourable captains;—whoſe ſupreme pleaſure conſiſted in betting their fortunes on the turning of a die, the ſhuffling of a pack of cards, or the heels of a running horſe. Poor ſouls! they are now all dead,—or working on the Thames. Heav'n pity them,—and forgive me, for ſquandering, in their company, ſums which might now afford me the delights of angels!

A troop of ſharking knaves eternally hovered round us;—cheaters by ſyſtem, who practice roguery on mathematical principles.——I ran riot through a thouſand diſſipations, without one thought or deed becoming a rational being; till, happily, the devil, who had long haunted me in the likeneſs of a Colonel, wrought a radical cure upon me, for the trifling ſum of twelve thouſand pounds.

It was after a long run of what I thought bad *luck* with that ſame noble colonel, that, in a fit of chagrin, I retreated to live a month at Cheveron village:—and a certain lady at the manſion-

manſion-houſe made the place ſo delightful, that at the end of three months I had no deſire to leave it. But my Colonel, the tormentor, found me out. He engaged me at the old trade, and with his old ſucceſs.——I hope I ſhall never forget the edifying lecture he gave me one night, or rather morning, after winning four thouſand.

Mr Woodville, ſaid the old, prolix, tautological ſharper,—you have now run your race,—you have finiſhed your campaign,—and you are qualified to be one of us. You are not now, I take it, worth a groat——but

then, Sir, you have had much obſervation, inſight, and experience.—— You have begun betimes to ſuffer the ſlings and arrows of outrageous Fortune. But this is not the worſt, I take it; and misfortunes ſeldom come ſingle: For there is Lady Louiſa Fanfare—her father bought a peerage laſt week; and, not to keep that honour long from his ſon, departed this wretched life yeſterday.——By the bye, the young Lord is a pretty manikin—a delicate pigeon, that may yield ſome of us nice picking——But Lady Louiſa, as I was going to ſay, is really a moſt agreeable, beautiful, and lovely creature. I have been told

by

by ſome who pretend to know her mind, that ſhe had a fooliſh hankering after you; and, as I take it, you would not have hung backward—— ſhe is no morſel to make mows at—twenty thouſand pounds (the exact ſum you have loſt) and poſſibilities are good gifts. But here is the curſe of curſes—ſome whiſperer, tatler, or babler, hath informed her of your rare doings; and even had the audacity to affirm and ſet forth, that I am no leſs than a rogue, rook, and ſharper, who have pillaged you of thoſe fair means that might have ſupported you in eaſe and dignity, and now will leave you to want and infamy. Upyd

on this falſe and ſcandalous aſperſion, ſhe hath conceived a moſt grievous hatred, averſion, and dudgeon, againſt you—and me too, I take it—and this morning is really gone for London, to diſplay her fire-new honours in the faſhionable circles, and attract ſome admirer of more ſenſe, and better fortune, than your worſhip. You have now nothing left, as I take it, but to ſtudy the occult ſciences, and, for preſent ſubſiſtence, to turn toad-eater to ſome generous patron.

I ſat ſeveral minutes in dumb meditation; execrating, inwardly, the cruel

cruel levity of the fair one, who could ſo eaſily credit the tale of my miſery, and condemn me finally without a hearing; but far more bitterly curſing my own madneſs, which expoſed me to ſuch a calamity.

A reſolution, inſpired by my good angel, then ſuddenly ſprung up in my mind.——You ſing *Te Deum* a little too ſoon, my dear Colonel, ſaid I—Neither your victory nor my ruin are yet complete. I feel, indeed, all the horrors of dependence—the whips and ſcorns of the time—the proud man's contumely—and pangs of deſpiſed love: but I am yet maſter of

two thouſands; and from this hour I ſet Fortune at defiance. Farewell Folly, Glare, and Deceit—welcome Obſcurity, Simplicity, and Independence!——Nay, but hear me, quoth he, and underſtand me—Shall I give you your revenge? Good Mr Devil, ſaid I, you tempt in vain; the hour of darkneſs is paſt.

In a few days I had the good luck to purchaſe this farm; on which I took up my reſidence. My dear ſiſter came, in the pride of her wit, to ridicule my ruſtication; and even madly offered me her fortune, five thouſand pounds, to raiſe my head

once

once more. Finding me not to be moved, ſhe generouſly reſolved to live here with me; and has had no reaſon to repent that ſtep.

As for myſelf, I have led the rural life in all its joy; happy in my independence, and reſolute to maintain it. My heart, indeed, ſtill longs for ſomething to be kind to: and perhaps, in time, I may be able to compaſs the parſon's daughter, or Squire Ticklepitcher's niece. Of titled ladies I muſt think no more.

Lady Louiſa. Right, Sir—perfectly right. Now hear the other ſide.

The abrupt departure you complain of, was cauſed by an expreſs from my father on his death-bed—of which I did myſelf the honour to write you an account, in a very fooliſh ſtyle, I believe; and that letter, you being out of the way, I gave to Colonel Whynyard, ſuppoſing him your friend, as I was ſtepping into the chariot to go to London.——Ha! what mean you, Sir?—Quit my hand—Have you yet the arrogance to think of titled ladies?——Do you ſuppoſe I care for that ſoft inſinuating look, or the trick of rolling your eyes? I am not the charming, noble-minded, generous Louiſa of Cheveron-place!

I

I am Lady Louisa Fanfare—Know your distance, and learn to keep it.

What more they said, and how they parted, I cannot tell; for I must not spend all my ink on them. I protest I have almost forgot poor Lord Fanfare—therefore,

Desine Menalios mecum, mea tibia, versus.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

IN WHICH A PLOT IS LAID.

THE king of Iſrael felt not more vexation for the refuſal of honeſt Naboth's vineyard, than Lord Fanfare for that of Woodville's farm. It daily troubled his thoughts, and nightly diſturbed his ſleep. He ardently prayed for ſome opportunity to diſtreſs that inſolent youth; and would certainly, in his wrath, have defied him to mortal combat, had he not been reſtrained by that portion of timidity,

timidity, which the wiſdom of Nature hath infuſed into all weak animals, to hinder them from provoking the attacks of enemies which they are unable to repel.

He ſent for Whittington, and held a private conſultation, both to learn a more diſtinct account of the object of his hatred, and to adviſe on ways and means of revenge.

The ſteward, by all the rhetoric he was maſter of, endeavoured to diſſuade him from the latter; aſſuring him, that Woodville was not a man to be raſhly meddled with, being a very

very devil in a quarrel, and totally inſenſible of danger; and that, beſides, he had good friends to take his part; his ſiſter being married to Sir James Violet, a neighbouring baronet, over whom ſhe had acquired a perfect ſway, by the power of her extraordinary beauty and wit.

This laſt particular powerfully took the Peer's attention. He queſtioned Whittington earneſtly and minutely concerning this knight and his wife: then diſmiſſing the lawyer in a great hurry, he ſhut the door, and began to caper about his cloſet in ecſtaſy. I wanted but two things, ſaid he, to make

make me happy—a miſtreſs—and revenge——here they come together. Lady Violet ſhall ſupply the place of that curſed jilt Sally B——; and my delicious triumph over her ſhall redouble on the heart of her brother the tortures his arrogance has given me. Powers of ſoft Perſuaſion, be now propitious on my ſide!

Compoſing his rapture, he went in ſearch of his wife; who was all this while little more at eaſe than he. The image of Woodville had taken faſt poſſeſſion of her heart; where it hourly ſunk deeper, and kindled fiercer deſires; which ſhe was ſo far from

from ſtruggling with, that ſhe foſtered them with all the warmth of licentious imagination. To reſiſt a dangerous impreſſion, and repreſs a criminal deſire, were rules that found no place in her ſyſtem of morality.

She was therefore not a little pleaſed when her Lord came to her, lamenting the lonely ſtate in which they then lived; and propoſing, for the promotion of a more general acquaintance in thoſe parts, that they ſhould have a maſked ball, to which they ſhould invite all the people of conſequence within a convenient diſtance; and particularly Sir James Violet's

Violet's family, who, he was informed, were mighty good ſort of people.

Lady Fanfare warmly applauded the propoſal; in which, indeed, ſhe had the ſame view with himſelf.—— But, my Lord, ſaid ſhe, I think we had better have it a *fete-champetre*.— O, I have doated on a *fete-champetre* ever ſince we were at Lady Betty's!

It ſhall be both, ſaid Lord Fanfare, delighted at this good-humour of his wife, who had not vouchſafed to agree with him in any one thing for many weeks before. And now he

was

was juſt propoſing a day for the entertainment, when, to daſh his joy, a phæton drove into the court; from which ſtept the redoubted figure of Colonel Whynyard.

This perſonage had little warlike in his appearance. Inſtead of the lofty port, and martial ſtride——he ſlouched, and huddled his ſteps;—and his preſence gave you rather the idea of a ſmall, tattling, whiffling, ſhopkeeper, than of a mighty truncheon-bearer.

At ſight of him, however, Lord Fanfare changed colour—wiſhed him at

at the devil—damned him eternally to hell—and took him by the hand, saying—My dear Colonel, I am happy to see you here.

From which it is plain, that he was perfectly polite—that is, a perfect dissembler.

CHAP. VII.

A MATRIMONIAL PROPOSAL.

THE Lady being withdrawn, Lord Fanfare began to make many excuſes to the Colonel for his leaving the town ſo precipitately; alleging, particularly, his great love for rural ſcenes, and the immenſe pleaſure he found in contemplating Nature's ſimple charms. He then began to ſtammer out ſomething about the bond which he had given for his debt of honour.——My dear Lord, quoth the

the Colonel, interrupting him, don't mention ſuch a poor, paltry, inſignificant trifle. What is it between friends? If I thought it troubled, diſturbed, or vexed your Lordſhip,—or that the cancelling it could make you more my friend in what I now come to reveal and propoſe, I would this moment tear and ſcatter it to all the winds of Heaven.

Pray, my dear Colonel, explain yourſelf.

My Lord, you have a ſiſter. To ſay that ſhe is noble, virtuous, and fair, were but to ſpend my breath in

vain, and tell you what you know already: For which reaſon, I ſhall paſs that topic of diſcourſe; on which I could otherwiſe enlarge and expatiate, with much pleaſure, delight, and ſatisfaction;—for I hate, abhor, and deteſt, all ſuperfluous words.—But I muſt ſpeak of what your Lordſhip probably knows not; which is, that I have of late been turning my thoughts, deſires, and affections, towards matrimony——A ſtate which, in my view, ſeems to promiſe much happineſs——

Oh, cried Lord Fanfare, the only thing on earth deſirous! What a bleſſing

bleſſing is the ſoft indiſſoluble band which unites one for ever to a tender friend!

Hail, wedded Love! myſterious law, true ſource,
Perpetual fountain of domeſtic ſweets!
Here Love his golden ſhafts employs, here lights
His conſtant lamp, and waves his purple wings.

It makes my heart dance, continued the Colonel, to hear your Lordſhip's noble ſentiments of this matter; eſpecially as they perfectly agree and coincide with my own. I wiſh all our opinions may be equally harmonious and concordant;—for, ah, my Lord! the charming Lady Louiſa, your ſiſter, is the fair one for whom I ſigh,

cry, and die. And if this paper can ſecure your intereſt in her, on the day that gives her to my arms it ſhall go to the flames.

Give me your hand, Colonel—— Louiſa is yours. Make this houſe your ſummer reſidence. We ſhall do our beſt to amuſe you; and you ſhall not want thoſe opportunities which a lover wiſhes for.

He then communicated to him the idea of the propoſed maſquerade; and even made no ſcruple to avow his deſign in it; believing the Colonel a man of more liberal notions than to think

think the worſe of him for being a deliberate adulterer. But, to his great ſurpriſe, the Colonel totally diſapproved, condemned, and reprobated the plot.——Is this conſiſtent, my Lord, quoth he, with your elegant deſcription of matrimonial felicity?

Lord Fanfare hung his head—and even bluſhed—for this horrid blunder, which the fulneſs of his joy had hurried him into. But now being too far gone to recede, he affirmed, that his opinion of motrimony was juſt, though he himſelf had not found it ſo; that his wife's chief pleaſure

was to teaze and torment him; that he was informed Lady Violet had equal cauſe of complaint, her huſband's humour being quite oppoſite to hers; and that he ſaw no reaſon why two perſons, miſerable at home, might not ſeek happineſs abroad.

How far he ſpoke truth in regard to the ſtate of Lady Violet, will be ſeen in the next chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HAPPY COUPLE.

VALOMBROSA, the ſeat of Sir James Violet, was one of the moſt delightful ſpots I ever ſaw: and if I had nothing better to offer my reader than deſcriptions of ſtill-life, I would certainly here deſcribe it at length. It was no place of ſtupendous air, where unwieldy wealth and cumbrous pomp repoſed, and indignant ſpurned the cottage from the green. Its prevailing expreſſions were the

the ſoft and the agreeable, inſpiring the viſitor with a preſentiment of the owner's character. Soft and agreeable, indeed, was that youthful knight—benevolent often to exceſs—and ſenſible to weakneſs. Tremblingly alive to the gentle paſſions, in ſuch a degree, as by more hardy ſpirits would have been deemed effeminacy, he lived, immerſed in his groves, with his charming Matilda, regardleſs of what mighty events paſſed in the great world.

What a fool is man!—he would ſay to his lovely ſpouſe, as they roamed the green copſe, or traced the paſtoral

ſtoral ſtream——what a fool is man! to ſpend his beſt days, and waſte his vigorous ſpirits, in a thouſand needleſs toils and troubles!——Is it to paſs thirty or forty years in plundering and betraying—ourſelves betrayed and plundered all the while——that Heaven calls us into exiſtence?——Is is to be ſtained with blood and ſlaughter, that our earth is covered with verdure and bloom?——And muſt he be reckoned an inglorious daſtard, who thankfully enjoys life's bleſſings, without ſtriving to augment its miſeries?——Such is the voice of opinion!——I deſpiſe——I deteſt it. Let the wheel of empire roll, by the impulſe

impulſe of Faction, Folly, and its other maſter-ſprings; let the ſtateſman enjoy his intrigues, and the warrior his triumphs;—thy heart, Matilda, is my empire, and thy love my triumph.

Several able philoſophers have pronounced, that paſſionate love cannot be laſting; and that the pleaſant accounts which we find in many hiſtories, of raptures continuing for a twelvemonth, or more, are all extravagant fictions, as much out of nature as the exploits of Amadis de Gaul, Jack the Giant-killer, or Fingal King of Morven.

But

But what have philoſophers—men of ink and gall—to do with love?—The annals of literature can teſtify, that their prince, Sir Iſaac Newton, knew no more about the ladies, than ladies know about ſpherical trigonometry.

Therefore I ſhall, without fear, bring on one more happy couple, whoſe ardent paſſion two years of wedlock had not damped. Lady Violet was a beauty of ſo rare and uncommon a caſt, that her huſband might really (as the ſong goes) *find variety in one.* Her face and diſpoſition gave the lie to all the rules of phyſiognomy:

ſiognomy: the former being in that ſtyle of beauty which the painters give to Eloiſa,—ſtriking—penetrating—awful; while the latter was the moſt frolickſome, capricious, and humorous, imaginable.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

A DISPUTE.

THEY were ſitting, at the cloſe of the day, in a bower of luxuriant jeſſamines, faſt by the margin of a placid rivulet, whoſe ſleeping flow no rough impediment diſturbed, when a moſt polite card of invitation to Lord Fanfare's maſquerade was delivered to them.

A maſquerade! cried Lady Violet—delightful!——I am in raptures at

at the very name!——Let me conſider,—what dreſs ſhall I have?—a veſtal or a bacchanal?—a ſultana or a nun?——Pray, Sir James, favour me with your ſerious advice. You have ſome taſte—a pretty little tiny taſte.

My dear Matilda, can you really expect any pleaſure in ſuch a ſcene—in ſuch a congreſs of abſurdities?—Has nature grown weary of ſupplying us with delights, that we muſt call on vitiated art, and worſhip deluſive fantaſy?——What is there to captivate us, in a ſuite of glaring rooms, filled with noiſome ſteams, the ſickly gleam

gleam of wax-lights, the noiſe of inſipid fiddling, and the grinning and chattering of a few antique figures? ——Are we not better here, enjoying the bloom of ſummer, the glowing ſcenes painted by the hand of nature, and the muſic inſpired by Heaven?

Knight, ſaid the lady, I think I did never ſee thee more miſtaken. Whence ariſes the pleaſure of harmony but from the proper intervention of diſcords?—Shall we not, after friſking a night in *fairy*-land—or *folly*-land, if you pleaſe,—return with better reliſh to trim our daiſies in the lawn, and our iriſes by the river's

ſide—to gaze on the ſun's farewell-beams as they tremble on yon high-waving pines,—and liſten to the breezes that ſob among the cliffs, to the warbling of the nightingale in the wood, and the ſong of the milk-maid in the vale?

Bewitching ſophiſt!——cried Sir James, throwing one arm around her ſnowy neck——bewitching ſophiſt—we ſhall go.

CHAP. X.

INTELLIGENCE EXTRAORDINARY.

WALKING ſlowly homeward, they were met by Roger Darnel, Mr Woodville's principal ſervant; who, with an arch and jovial look, requeſted a private audience of Lady Violet. She knew him for an honeſt, talkative, merry fellow; and judging rightly that it was a matter of no great conſequence for which he demanded her private ear,

commanded him to utter it without ceremony.

Then, quoth he, an't pleaſe your Ladyſhip, I believe my maſter is a-going to be married to the proud Lord's pretty ſiſter.

—Ay, Roger! here is great news. But how do you think ſo?

Why, an't like your Ladyſhip, I can ſee as far into a millſtone as another man. I *feed* them the other night a long hour ſitting beneath Tom Burney's oak—juſt like as Sir James and you were but now——and they ſhook hands

hands at parting—thus—as it were; and, to my thinking, ſhe looked as if ſhe did not care though my maſter had come cloſer to the point. To be ſure, my maſter is the handſomeſt able-bodieſt young gentleman in all theſe parts—and the clevereſt too. He will lift a corn-ſack with Robin Ironſide, or dance a jig with Jack Tiptoe.—Ecod he could have whirled her about like a moppit.——But more than all this—I went this morning to water our horſes at the Bank-ſpring, and there ſtood this ſame lady fair, poring on the bark of the *owld* aſh. Its all cut and carved with L's and F's, and hooks and crooks, that

I can make nothing of. She *axed* me if I belonged to Mr Woodville's farm. Yes, an't pleaſe your honor's ladyſhip, quoth I,—I have that good luck.——Then, friend, ſaid ſhe, you are happy in your ſervice? So happy, ſays I, that I would not leave it to ſerve the greateſt lord in the land.——And then, Madam, I began, and gave my maſter ſuch a character as I thought he deſerved,—the beſt in the world. I ſhould have been a rogue and ungrateful raſcal, had I ſaid a word leſs.—And in troth ſhe was very well pleaſed at it, for ſhe gave me a crown to drink. Now, an't like your Ladyſhip, I could not live

ſive without telling to ſomebody this good news. To my maſter I would not; for I know he don't like ſervants to meddle in his private matters. To my wife I durſt not; for poor Cicily, though a good careful cheery wench, is not a body for a ſecret. So, after our day's work was over, I took a walk this way to tell it to your Ladyſhip: for nothing makes me ſo happy as my maſter's good fortune;——and there is not a woman in the world too good for him——no, not the queen of Sheba.

You are an honeſt good fellow, Roger, ſaid Lady Violet, whatever be

in your news. Give Sir James's compliments and mine to your master, and tell him we shall see him soon at the farm.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

ANECDOTE OF THE INDEPENDENT.

THIS Roger, ſaid the knight, is very warmly attached to your brother. I have often obſerved him watching his maſter's looks, and ſtriving to anticipate his commands.

He is an honeſt ſoul, ſaid Matilda, and would run any hazard for my brother. I have ſeen a thouſand inſtances of his zeal and fidelity; yet he

he never thinks he can repay his maſter's kindneſs.

That kindneſs muſt then have been conſiderable, ſaid Sir James.

Not at all, replied the Lady—only a common exertion of humanity,—no more than what you do yourſelf every day.——It was the firſt year of Charles's reign at the farm, when he and I were ſitting one ſummer's evening at my ſpinnet, practiſing a duet in the Olympiad, when the ſqueaking of a common flute in the yard drew our attention from the luxurious harmony of Pergoleſe. We

ſtept

ſtept to the window, and ſaw all our lads and laſſes dancing merrily. Our hearts, then ſoftened and attuned to univerſal philanthropy, could not reſent the interruption of our concert, nor forbid the artleſs delight which the dancers received from the harſh ſtrains of this rude minſtrel. But the figure of the performer himſelf ſoon took all our attention. He was a great ſtrong-boned fellow, marvelouſly tattered, and pitifully diſcoloured with the jaundice; his black locks, knotty and combined, hung lank about his ſhoulders; and his buſhy eye-brows were knit, ruefully expreſſive of deep melancholy.——

Though

Though he did all poſſible juſtice to his employers, by playing them a lively jig with the beſt execution he could exert; yet, by the ſilent tear which trickled down his yellow cheek, it was plain that his heart took no part in the performance.

After the firſt dance, they brought him ſome bread and cheeſe; which, inſtead of eating, he crammed eagerly into his pocket, and prepared to play again, as if in hopes of earning more. Charles then called to fetch him into the parlour——and he entered with many profound bows.——You look very ill, poor fellow, ſaid Charles:

I think, if you could, you ſhould have ſtaid at home till you got rid of that diſeaſe.——I am indeed very ill, ſaid he, an' pleaſe your honour; but I have thoſe at home who are worſe.—Bleſs us, man! ſaid Charles, whom have you at home?

——A father, an' pleaſe your honour, dying of age and hunger——and a wife but eight days brought to bed——who ſince yeſternight has not taſted food. My poor old father!—my dear Cicily!——if they could be helped, I would ſit down beneath the next tree, and die content.

Charles

Charles turned to the window, coughing and blowing his noſe.——This is a hard caſe, Matilda—What ſhall we do?——By all means, ſaid I, ſend ſomebody inſtantly to relieve the miſerable fainting creatures; this poor ſoul is unable to travel himſelf with ſufficient ſpeed.

He fell on his knees; and, with claſped hands, began to ejaculate his bleſſings. But my brother, calling in all the ſervants, aſked his name.—Roger Darnel——None of them knew him. Where is your houſe? In a village five miles weſt, called *Barnley*.——Which of you know this village?

village?——I do, cried Thomas the threſher. Then, Thomas, ſaid my dear brother, if ever thou wilt deſerve a mug of ſtrong beer at my hands, take this bottle of wine and ſome bread—mount bay Dobbin, and make what ſpeed thou canſt to Barnley—there inquire out Roger Darnley's cottage, and play the nurſe to his wife and the old man till he come to relieve thee.

Thomas ran out with the word; and in two minutes galloped off.—Poor Roger was ſtill on his knees, imprecating all the bleſſings of Heaven on our heads. Charles bade him

him riſe and go to the kitchen, where he would get ſome refreſhment. He roſe, but could not leave the room without telling us his ſtory.

Till within this half year, an' pleaſe your honour and my good lady, I was as merry a lad as you could ſee—I had never cauſe to be woful: but, as our parſon ſays, man don't know what is good for him in this world of ſhadows.——When I married our Cicily, I rented a farm of my own, twenty miles from this pariſh, which my father and grandfather had lived on before me; and I deſigned to leave it to my ſon, if God ſent me one.

But

But the devil, an' pleaſe your honour, tempted me to go to law with the 'Squire; and though every body ſaid I would win,—yet, I can't tell how, but ſo it was, I loſt. Then, having given to the lawyers what money I had to pay my rent with, I was turned out.——But I cared not; I was hale and ſtrong: ſo I came with my Cicily and my father to Barnley, where I took a little houſe, and worked day's work——till this ſad ſickneſs came on me, and made me ſo weak and lazy, an' pleaſe your honour, that I could do nothing. Then poor Cicily fell in the ſtraw—ſhe has got a chopping boy, that ſmiles in

her face, and ſqueezes my finger—Poor rogue, he does not know our hardſhips. Cicily would ſoon be well, if ſhe could keep from crying; but we have done nothing, an' pleaſe your Ladyſhip, but weep over our poor infant. The old man ſighs and prays to himſelf in his bed, and bids us truſt in Providence—which to be ſure is right—but this morning I had not a morſel of bread for one of their mouths; and being unable, God knows, to work for it, I took my flute, which I once little thought of putting to that uſe, and ſtole out, to ſee if I could get a few halfpence. Not liking to be ſeen at that trade in

our

our town, I walked this way: I could go but ſlowly; for I found myſelf, I thought, worſe. However, after dinner-time, I got as far as Sir Hugh Gomphion's [*now Lord Fanfare's*], where I ſtood in the porch, and played the *hay-maker's dance*.—But the gentlemen-footmen came out and mocked me. One ſaid, I didn't play in the *guſty grand*—and another, that I didn't know nothing of the flats and ſharps—which is very true, an' pleaſe your honour:—yet I was willing to do the beſt I could, till Sir Hugh himſelf threw up the window, and ordered them to beat me away from the gate.——I then came down here,

where your honour's people were very kind to me. But God only knows what relief yourſelf and this Lady has given to my poor heart—and he will reward you; for I never can:—though, if it pleaſe him to ſpare me, I will ſerve you to my dying-day.

After this relation, they gave him his ſupper, and ſent him home on a horſe. Charles next day went with Dr Burdock to viſit his cottage.—— The old man was quite worn out, and died not long after. I need not tell you, that Roger, Cicily, and her boy,

boy, happily recovered, nor what faithful adherents they have since been to my brother.

CHAP. XII.

BEGINNING OF THE MASQUERADE.

THE card which invited Sir James Violet and his Lady to the maſquerade, informed them, that a variety of dreſſes would be provided at Fanfare-houſe; ſo that they need give themſelves no trouble on that head; and added, that the company of Lady Violet, a day or two before the time, would be highly agreeable and obliging, to aſſiſt Lady Fanfare in contriving the decorations of her rooms.

On

On the day, therefore, before that of the ſolemnity, they drove to Mr Woodville's farm. This gentleman, they found, had alſo got a ticket; which, however, he was not determined to uſe. And with him were aſſembled 'Squire Ticklepitcher, his two ſons, and his niece Miſs Padragon, all on the ſame occaſion—— breaking their brains about their dreſſes.

Lady Violet, after ſome private converſation with her brother, propoſed that they ſhould go immediately to Fanfare-houſe; which was agreed

to by all except Woodville; who was therefore left alone.

Arriving at the mighty manſion, the figure of Lady Violet utterly aſtoniſhed Lord Fanfare. He thought he had never ſeen a form ſo heavenly. All his fine language of compliment and ſupple civilities for a moment forſook him—but only for a moment——Venus herſelf could not have inſpired him with a true and laſting paſſion.

Recovering himſelf from this ſudden embarraſſment, he ſoon behaved like a polite gentleman, and loaded with

with profeſſions of friendſhip the man to whom he meant to do the greateſt poſſible injury.

It appeared, however, that the Peereſs had not waited for any aſſiſtance in regard to her decorations. Already a choice band of fiddlers were arrived from London: an orcheſtra was raiſed in the great ſaloon: partitions were removed—ſide-boards arranged—luſtres prepared—an arcade of boughs carried from the porch to the middle of the parterre, where ſtood a ruſtic temple; beyond which were ſeveral conſtellations in trees, ready to be lighted up. The ward-

wardrobe was extravagantly ſplendid, conſiſting of a vaſt variety of fancy-dreſſes.

Among theſe the company all went to pick and chooſe,—Lord Fanfare cloſely attending Lady Violet, and watching her eyes moſt devoutly; notwithſtanding which, he could not diſcover what habit ſhe preferred: and, to confound him more, on the day of exhibition, ſhe departed with Sir James to dreſs at her brother's. He had now nothing for it but accurate obſervation.

The expected evening came, and the

the masks began to appear in no contemptible number. Lady Fanfare as a Greek Sultana, and Lady Louisa as a Diana, were most superb figures: —Mr Marrowfat, vicar of the parish, a hermit—his three daughters Payssannes—'Squire Ticklepitcher a Roman senator—his sons janisaries—his niece an Iphigenia—Colonel Whynyard a Turk—Lord Fanfare a Pope —and several dominos.

Lord and Lady Fanfare both carefully noted the arrival of Sir James Violet's coach; from which alighted a Druid, an ancient Pistol, and a Mrs Quickly. This satisfied his Lordship.

But

But the Lady was much puzzled to know which of the male characters might be Woodville. The muſic ſtruck up one of Abel's thundering overtures; which ſome thought mighty fine, and others thought nonſenſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

PEARLS CAST BEFORE SWINE.

SOON after, the Hermit (Mr Marrowfat), advancing to the Pope with a devout proſtration, craved licence of his holineſs to preach a ſermon; which, he ſaid, he had brought on purpoſe from his cell, for the edification of the noble company. Oho! quoth the Pope, have we a preaching hermit? Well, you have my leave, for the novelty of the thing, provided that you be not too long-

long-winded—And provided, cried the Turk, that he don't preach up a cruſade; by my ſabre and turban, I will not ſuffer that!——Never fear me, ſaid the hermit; I know where I am; and if I don't fit you for doctrine, pluck my beard off.——Then placing himſelf in the middle of the ruſtic temple, and gathering a ſufficient group around him, he gave out his text; the ſtrangeneſs of which ſo took their attention, that he was ſuffered to proceed, and, through the whole, favoured with profound ſilence.

Now, here follows an authentic copy

copy of his ſermon; and if you can venture on ſuch kind of reading, I can aſſure you, my dear reader, that you will be nothing the worſe for peruſing it. I muſt inform you, however, that it was not written by Marrowfat. He had culled it from a bundle of papers left him by a poor twenty-pound curate; a young fellow who, with a ſpirit ill-ſuited to his ſtate, had lived a few years unfriended, and died unknown.

JUDGES

JUDGES xxi. 25.——*They ſaid, Call for Samſon, that he may make us ſport. And they called for Samſon out of the priſon-houſe; and he made them ſport.*

IT has been remarked, that characters which, at firſt view, ſtrike one with eſteem or admiration, generally fall off upon more intimate acquaintance. When high expectations are formed, diſappointment is more heavily felt: and when we conceive a great opinion of any perſon, the ſlighteſt impropriety in his behaviour gives

gives us a ſhock. The hiſtory of Samſon, one of the moſt ſingular perſonages that ever the world ſaw, ſtrongly confirms the truth of this obſervation.——It ſeems as a picture, held forth by the Spirit of Wiſdom, to ſhow us on what a ſandy foundation all ſchemes that depend on human force are built,—how weak and fooliſh a creature man at beſt is,—how fatal the effects of diſſipation are to him,—and of how little avail the greateſt natural powers are, unleſs duly governed and applied to proper ends.

The extraordinary and preternatu-

ral circumſtances that uſher Samſon into the world, raiſe our hopes of his future exploits and military glory to the higheſt pitch. Announced by the repeated deſcent of an angel,—born of a mother till then deemed barren,—nurſed up by a particular regimen revealed from heaven,—and declared the deliverer of his country, we think there is nothing too much to be expected from ſuch a hero.

We are diſappointed at his very firſt appearance in public—the very opening of his career is unfavourable. He connects himſelf in the tendereſt manner with the enemies of his coun-

try,

try, in defiance of the advices and remonſtrances of his parents. His killing the lion was a wanton exertion of his amazing ſtrength; natural enough for a young man, but adding nothing to the bright ſide of his character. The champion of Iſrael ought to have had nobler employment than waging war with the beaſts of the field. The uſe, however, which he afterwards made of that feat, involved him in ſome petty broils with the relations of his wife; and, in the end, induced him to kill thirty men, to pay a forfeit loſt by his own imprudence. Upon this occaſion, the ſacred hiſtorian uſes an expreſ-

ſion, that "the ſpirit of the Lord came upon Samſon." By which I underſtand, not that God directed him to put to death thoſe men, becauſe it was an unjuſt and cruel action—but only that he was enabled to do it by the ſupernatural ſtrength which he had received from heaven.

His next exploit was to burn the fields of the Philiſtines by a very ſingular ſtratagem, in revenge for the treachery of his father-in-law. But all this while, ſo little were his countrymen ſenſible of the eminence of his character, that when the Philiſtines roſe to reſent the deſtruction of

of their corn and vineyards, the very tribe with whom he ſojourned agreed to deliver him up.——He ſeemed even to think it a favour that they themſelves did not ſlay him; and ere he would truſt himſelf in their hands, exacted an oath, that no violence ſhould by them be offered to him. The Philiſtines then receiving him bound, and apparently defenceleſs, began to exult over the ſuppoſed fall of their terrible adverſary: upon which he roſe in all his ſtrength, and in fair battle ſlew a thouſand of them. This is unqueſtionably the greateſt action of his life.

Soon after, he was again enſnared by the ſin which ſeems moſt eaſily to have beſet him—a love for ſtrange women. Confident of his reſiſtleſs ſtrength, he ſuffered himſelf to be ſurrounded and ſhut up in the houſe of his miſtreſs, in the heart of a city where his name was deteſted. He accordingly effected his eſcape with eaſe; but in a manner that marked his common wanton miſapplication of that amazing force which Nature had given him for better purpoſes. To have burſt open the gates, was ſufficient for his enlargement; but not content with that, he tears them quite away,

away, and carries them up to the top of a hill; a movement which added nothing either to his freedom or ſecurity.

Untaught by this hair-breadth eſcape, we find him yet once more entangled by the ſame intoxicating paſſion. That connection proved fatal; and the relation of his conduct in it, ſhows him to us in a light ſo poor and deſpicable, that we can hardly afford a tear to its tragical cataſtrophe.——At the opening of this ſcene of treachery on the one hand, and weakneſs on the other, Samſon appears to act with ſome degree of

caution, by giving falſe information to the abandoned creature who ſought his ruin. But this only ſerves to make his ſucceeding dotage more conſpicuous: for by diſcovering to him her infamous deſign, it ought to have ſet him on his guard againſt allowing her any ſhare of his confidence. It ought, indeed, that moment to have detached him from her altogether. But it did neither: for after amuſing her ſeveral times with a repetition of the ſame trick, he at length, with infantine folly, revealed his deareſt ſecret to her; and ſhe, without delay, availed herſelf of it to work his deſtruction.

The

The indignation we feel here, however, ſoon ſubſides, and yields to pity. We find him now reduced to a ſtate of wretchedneſs, in which the view of his miſery makes us forget his imprudence. How fallen! alas, how changed! this once reſiſtleſs hero. ——From mowing down ranks of warriors with his ſingle arm,—from piercing ſerried ſquadrons unarmed and alone,—from ſtanding like a rock in the midſt of waves, ſmiling at the feeble attacks of ſurrounding foes,—reduced to work the drudgery of a condemned ſlave, in priſon and cruel darkneſs; and, when removed from this, to ſuffer yet worſe diſgrace, to

make

make ſport for the rabble,—to be expoſed in the theatre like a ſort of monſter,—the object of deriſion and ſcorn;——we cannot wonder that, weary of his life, he ſeized that opportunity of putting an end to it, eſpecially as he could ſweeten the horrors of death by the pleaſure of revenge. There is no reaſon to ſuppoſe that patriotiſm had any ſhare in this action, nor any other motive but diſguſt at exiſtence, and a deſire of private vengeance.

In reading the life of this extraordinary man, we feel almoſt a continual diſappointment. Warmed by the ideas

ideas of a judge, a deliverer, an invincible hero,—imagination bodies forth a train of glorious ſcenes. We fancy him in the dawn of youth, inuring himſelf to hardſhip and toil; aſſociating with thoſe moſt capable of aiding him in enterpriſes of difficulty; taking the field at length, attended by the young in perſon, and by the aged in their bleſſings and prayers: Mighty battles then are fought, and won chiefly by his proweſs; till, by a ſeries of honourable victories, the peace of his country being ſecured, and its glory ſufficiently advanced, he returns to govern by his wiſdom

the

the people he had defended by his valour.

Inſtead of all this, he only engages in a few private broils, hurtful to himſelf, and uſeleſs to his country; enervates himſelf by varied diſſipation; ſeems almoſt ſinking into effeminacy; and falls, ingloriouſly, by the deceitful blandiſhments of a worthleſs woman.

What inſtruction can this character afford us? There is evidently no diſtinguiſhing feature in it, except that of bodily ſtrength;—all the reſt is common, and, alas! too common.

In

In the growth, texture, and mechaniſm of his bones and muſcles, Samſon ſtands aloof from all the ſons of Adam: in every thing elſe, he falls into the ordinary rank of mortals. No perſon now receives ſuch a talent in truſt; and therefore it is needleſs to frame ſpeculations concerning the uſe or abuſe of it. We muſt look for ſome of Nature's gifts more generally beſtowed; which, by compariſon with this, we may learn to eſtimate truly, and cultivate advantageouſly.

The choice is not perplexing. We ſee daily, in the haunts of men, a character,

character, in all its dangers and temptations, nearly akin to corporeal ſtrength,—which is corporeal beauty. "The human form divine," always reſpectable when inhabited by Virtue, is found at times ſo exquiſitely finiſhed, that Imagination, in her moſt creative mood, can ſhape nothing beyond it.

This curious workmanſhip of Nature, in every age profuſely exerted, and with inexhauſtible variety, gives to certain individuals of both ſexes a diſtinction impoſſible to be deſcribed, though eaſily and irreſiſtibly felt. We are forced to add, that it is a diſtinction

tion in general disadvantageous to its possessor. The folly of parents, the early adulation of interested admirers, the suggestions of self-conceit, and a thousand other enemies, conspire against those favourites of Nature; and, at one time or other, render them objects of weariness, if not of disgust. Trusting entirely to external charms, every solid and permanent accomplishment is by them neglected, while they spend the inestimable days of youth in acquiring a few superficial and transitory trifles, as frail as the beauty they are meant to adorn. How many delightful forms attract our attention, which, upon examination,

nation, we quit with a ſigh of pity or a ſmile of contempt; finding their minds either mere voids of nothingneſs,—blanks of inſipidity,—or deſpicable magazines of vanity and folly. How many a young female thus ſteps into the world, confident of her charms as Samſon of his ſtrength, untutored by Wiſdom, unguarded by Prudence,—running wild through all the mazes of fantaſtic diſſipation, and in the end, perhaps, drawing ruin upon herſelf? How many a young man, thus depending on the graces of his bodily frame, ſpends his beſt years, utterly neglectful of every noble purpoſe and rational enjoyment of

of life, deſpiſed by every man (and woman too) of ſenſe, and only acceptable to beings whoſe frivolity equals his own!

But neither of theſe characters will feel all their miſery during the days of youth and luxuriant health; for then their ſociety will be tolerated by moſt people, and even courted by many: yet by how precarious a tenure do they hold even that privilege! Their enjoyment reſembles his, who feaſted royally in a room of ſtate with a ſword over his head, ſuſpended by a ſingle hair. And though they ſhould eſcape the ſtrokes of ſickneſs

and of accident, yet ſoon will the ſcene of joy be cloſed;—ſoon will the ruthleſs hand of Time crop every flower of youth and beauty;—Then what a diſconſolate and dreary waſte ſucceeds!——I am not able to imagine a ſtate on earth more wretched, than that of a perſon advanced in life, whoſe mind has never known the happy effects of cultivation, and whoſe pleaſures have been merely conſtitutional. Better were it indeed for that man never to have been born, than to drag the languid hours of age in liſtleſs wearineſs,—neglected,—deſpiſed,—and forgotten even before his death.——It is a ſtate of deſolation

againſt

againſt which the young ought carefully to fortify themſelves by a diligent culture of their beſt powers, and by acquiring thoſe accompliſhments and amuſements which depend not for their reliſh on the fine turn of the limbs, the brilliancy of the eyes, or the poliſh and tranſparent glow of the ſkin.

In general, it is wrong to truſt blindly for our happineſs to any one natural gift, and neglect every other uſeful attainment. This remark greatly widens the field of inſtruction. We are not all men of ſtrength—we are not all beauties; but we have all received

ceived ſome talent in truſt from Heaven, for which we are accountable. To miſtake that talent,—to over-rate it,—or to miſapply it,—are the chief misfortunes to which we are expoſed: and he only fulfils the purpoſes of his life, who, by judicious inquiry, and by proper knowledge of himſelf, diſcovers where his ſtrength lies; who ſtrives to form a right eſtimation of it, and to enforce its exertions by every advantage in his power to obtain; who will not reveal it to the unworthy, exhauſt it in vile purſuits, nor proſtitute it to the advancement of ends which religion forbids, and wiſdom reprobates.

By

By ſuch rational and manly conduct, we may render our characters reſpectable; and it will be beyond the power of our moſt malicious enemies to make ſport of them: We may ſecure our happineſs, at leaſt as far as human happineſs can be ſecured; and while free from outward misfortune, we may enjoy every hour with reliſh. Age, which brings the frivolous, the idle, and the diſſipated, to a ſtate of premature oblivion, will only make us more venerable, and turn our enjoyments into a current more ſerene and pure. Man will admire a life ſo beautiful, and God will reward it.

Of this ſermon, as of all others, there were different judgments given.

Some ſaid it was good ſenſe; others, it was poor ſtuff:—but all agreed that it had kept them too long from their dancing. To dancing, therefore, they inſtantly began, and ſtrove, by their keenneſs, to redeem the time they had loſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

TETE-A-TETE.

AFTER ſome dances, the maſks began to form a ſet of tête-a-têtes ſufficiently whimſical. Lady Fanfare, making up to the Druid, aſked him pertly if he were Woodville.——He anſwered ſimply, No. This aſſured her that the furious Ancient Piſtol was her man; to whom ſhe quickly addreſſed herſelf with—I'm ſure I know you—Come, confeſs—you are Mr Woodville?

My name is Piſtol call'd, cried he characteriſtically.

Lady Fanfare. Well, but honeſt Piſtol, you are an intimate of Woodville?

Piſtol. I ken the wight,—he is of ſubſtance good.

Lady Fanfare. But are you really he?

Piſtol. When Piſtol lies, do this,—and fig me like the bragging Spaniard.

Lady Fanfare. Then, dear Sir, pray drop this cant, and ſpeak to me like yourſelf.

Piſtol. The things I ſpeak are juſt.

Lady Fanfare. You ſupport your aſſumed

aſſumed character perfectly well, Sir; but you need not ſtrain it farther. I am fully ſenſible of your abilities.

Piſtol. Why, then, rejoice therefor.

Lady Fanfare. Will you unmaſk?

Piſtol. Baſe is the ſlave that unmaſks!

Lady Fanfare. I have ſomething particular—if you will favour me with your attention, Mr Woodville.

Piſtol. He hears with ears.

Lady Fanfare. Shall we not reſt on this couch?

Piſtol. A foutra for the couch!

Lady Fanfare. I hope, Sir, I may truſt you?

Piſtol.

Piſtol. Truſt none;
For oaths are ſtraws, mens faiths are wafer cakes,
And holdfaſt is the only dog, my duck.

Lady Fanfare. I ſee, Sir, you ſcorn me.

Piſtol. Why, then, lament therefor. [*Exeunt.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

ANOTHER TETE-A-TETE.

IN another room were the Pope and Mrs Quickly.——My charming Lady Violet, quoth the Pope, what could put that ridiculous aukward dreſs in your head?—Curſe it—I'm vext to the ſoul to ſee the moſt elegant woman in the world deform'd in filthy dowlas, while my wife and ſiſter are flaunting it in ſtate!

The very yea and the no is, anſwered

ſwered the tattling goſſip, my huſband will allow me no better.

Is it poſſible! cried the Pope. Can I believe it! Oh, Lady Violet, what a huſband you have!

I pray you, quoth Mrs Quickly, come a little nearer this ways. To tell you in your ear—I lead a very ill life with him. He's a very jealouſy man. I lead a very frampold life with him, good heart.

His Holineſs, ſeeing her ſo forward, thought it his duty to keep pace with her. Revenge, cried he, my deareſt Lady Violet.—See, I throw my tiara at your feet. My ſoul and body are at your diſpoſal.

Quickly.

Quickly. Lord—Lord—your worſhip's a wanton. Well, Heavin forgive you—and all of us, I pray.

Pope. But why does that envious maſk ſo long rob me of your angelic charms?—With trembling lips, thus let me preſs this dear ſoft hand, while ——aw!

At that inſtant in ſtalked Piſtol, drawing his ſword, and crying,

O hound of Crete, think'ſt thou my ſpouſe to get!
The grave doth gape, and doating death is near;
Therefore exhale!

The Druid (Sir James Violet) had beheld this ſcene not unconcernedly.

But

But ſtifling his feelings, he whiſpered the Pope,——Your long coat, prieſt, protects you.——Then ſaid aloud to the ancient,—Man of war, be pacified,—put up thy ſword.

Piſtol. Not for Cadwallader and all his goats!

For Piſtol's cock is up, and flaſhing fire will follow.

Good captain, be quiet (cried Mrs Quickly). The gentleman is an honeſt gentleman. (Then aſide to the Ancient)—You know not how things go—draw off the company and leave us. To which he replied,

Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become,

And

And by my ſide wear ſteal?
Then Lucifer take all.——

But here their attention was diverted, by the Turk throwing his handkerchief at the Sultana, and the goddeſs Diana leading away Mrs Quickly. The reſt parted diverſely—the Druid ſighing piteouſly—Piſtol ſwaggering—and the Pope, cloſe maſked, watching his wife.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

A THIRD TETE-A-TETE.

DIANA (Lady Louiſa) having drawn Mrs Quickly apart to an arbour behind the ruſtic temple, there begged her to unmaſk; but that ſhe declined for ſome particular reaſons, which alſo induced her to continue her maſquerade voice; but as to the reſt, the converſation was in the common ſtyle. Lady Louiſa then inquired if ſhe had ever heard her brother, Mr Woodville, ſpeak of her? Mrs

Quickly

Quickly replied, that ſhe had heard him often;—ſometimes with regret,—ſometimes with rapture,—but always with reſpect.—And indeed, my dear Lady Louiſa, I am convinced, that the deep impreſſion which he confeſſes you formerly made on his heart, is not yet worn away. In ſpite of his natural flow of good ſpirits, and the perpetual round of avocations and diverſions with which he ſtudiouſly fills up his days, I have more than once caught him in the fact of ſighing in ſecret. I am ſorry for it; as your riſe in life, madam, has no doubt inſpired you with hopes of a much better eſtabliſhment than he, poor fel-

low, even in his better days, could have beſtowed.

Diana. You are miſtaken, Lady Violet. My elevation in rank made me form no new wiſh, but that of returning to my original obſcurity. And my ſentiments for your brother (whatever they may be), are no way influenced by his fortune.

Mrs Quickly. Pray, madam, give me leave to aſk if you ſent him his ticket? for he believes you did; and, but for that belief, would not have accepted it.

Diana. I did not: and it muſt have come from Lady Fanfare.

Mrs

Mrs Quickly. From Lady Fanfare! You ſurpriſe me.

Diana. You are happy, Lady Violet, in having no friends whom you need bluſh for; and in that reſpect I am worthy of your pity. I hope Mr Woodville, for his own ſake, will avoid any criminal connection.—The ſnare, I know, is ſpread for him. I give you this ſecret, madam, of my noble ſiſter:—it is a vicious one; and to conceal it, were to ſhare its guilt. Make what uſe of it your prudence and delicacy ſhall direct.

Mrs Quickly. My dear Lady Louiſa, you charm me. This generoſity, ſo pure—ſo diſintereſted—and exerted,

too, in behalf of a hapleſs youth whom you have forgotten, and doomed to deſpair——

Diana. Who told you ſo, Mrs Quickly?—Is it a mark of indifference, that I ſtrive thus to ſave him from ruin?

Mrs Quickly. Let me embrace you, my deareſt madam, and aſſure you, that my brother is in no danger. Setting aſide the idea of criminality, his paſſion for independence is too ſtrong to brook the chains of a rantipole dame of quality. His very preſence here this night is a breach of a vow which I heard him once make in the words of Smollet:

Thoſe

Thoſe ſculptur'd halls my feet ſhall never tread,
Where varniſh'd Vice and Vanity combin'd,
To dazzle and ſeduce, their banners ſpread,
And forge vile ſhackles for the free-born mind:

Where Inſolence his wrinkled front uprears,
And all the flow'rs of ſpurious Fancy blow;
And Title his ill-woven chaplet wears,
Full often wreath'd around the Miſcreant's brow:

Where ever-dimpling Falſehood, pert and vain,
Preſents her cup of ſtale Profeſſion's froth;
And pale Diſeaſe, with all his bloated train,
Torments the ſons of Gluttony and Sloth.

What tempted him to break this vow is beſt known to himſelf. For my part, I wiſh he were a lord,—or your ladyſhip a maid of low degree.—

Heigh-ho!——As for Lady Fanfare, what ſhe gets more of him than ſharp words—let it lie on my head.

CHAP. XVII.

END OF THE MASQUERADE.

IN this, however, ſhe ſeemed to have ſpoken too confidently: for in about an hour thereafter a moſt violent uproar aroſe in one of the rooms; the cauſe of which was as follows.

Ancient Piſtol had inſulted the Turk in the ſaloon, and ordered him to reſign the Sultana. The matter being referred to the lady, ſhe decided in favour of the Ancient; who

led her off triumphantly, exclaiming,

Shall dunghil curs confront the Helicons?
Then, Piſtol, lay thy head in Fury's lap:
Have we not Hiren here?

The indignant Turk forthwith joined with the Pope to watch their motions; and by and bye diſcovered them in a very intereſting ſituation. Loud and diſſonant aroſe the clamour of the Pope's reproaches, the Turk's revilings, the lady's defence, and her paramour's ranting. However, it ſoon ſubſided; Lord Fanfare declaring his intention

intention of bringing the matter before a higher court; having, as he ſuppoſed, excellent witneſſes of the diſhonourable fact in the perſons of the Turk and a reverend Friar, who proved to be the learned Mr Whittington.

Mrs Quickly whiſpered to Diana, Be aſſured, Lady Louiſa, that this is all a jeſt.

After a diſcovery ſo diſmal, it was vain to attempt farther merriment that night—or rather morning; for the ſun was now a good hour on his journey up the eaſtern ſteep. The

fiddlers

fiddlers intelligently untuned their fiddles, and the masks dropped away rapidly.

Sir James Violet and his company drove to the farm; where, after undressing, and dressing again, the knight refused to stay, and carried off his wife rather sullenly, leaving Woodville to prepare his exculpatory information in what manner he thought best.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

DESCRIPTION OF A KNIGHT.

AT three in the afternoon Lady Fanfare roſe, very little diſconcerted at the diſcovery of the preceding night. If ſhe felt any regret, it proceeded from what would have been matter of comfort to a woman of virtue—that her lord's ſuſpicion was perfectly groundleſs. Had her gallant been as impudent as was ſuppoſed, ſhe would have ſcorned the rage of her huſband, and the cenſures

ſures of the world; and ſmil'd at the loſs of fame and fortune, if that loſs had thrown her into Woodville's arms.

She perceived, that though the intended proſecution would end favourably for her, yet that her honour—(reputation, I mean) muſt ſuffer an eclipſe at leaſt, if not a total extinction; and ſeeing no reaſon why this ſhould be endured for nothing, a private meeting with Woodville was the conſummation ſhe moſt devoutly wiſhed for. To be ſcratched with the thorns of a roſe, without enjoying its delicious odour, was not to be borne.

No

No ſooner, therefore, did ſhe receive a card from Lord Fanfare, ſignifying that her immediate departure was expected, than ſhe embarked with her woman Mrs Carmine, and three dozen of trunks and band-boxes, in the coach, and drove ſtreight to Vez-hall, the ſeat of Sir Patrick Puff. She was there ſecure of a kind reception from that juvenile knight and his lady mother, who ſhe knew would liſten to her repreſentation of the affair with favourable ears.

Sir Patrick Puff, though now a moſt polite accompliſhed gentleman, was truly under as few obligations to

nature

nature or education as any man I ever knew. In the fatal moment of his animation, Nature had been remarkably ſparing to him of the intellectual being; nor had ſhe made him any great compenſation for this in his corporeal frame. His father chancing to leave the world in a ſort of pet ſoon after his birth, his education fell to be managed by his mother, a fool, and his uncle, a fop. Theſe two got him inſtructed in the knowledge and practice of dancing excellently well; they likewiſe hammered into him all the pretty complimental phraſes, which are thought to conſtitute the eſſence of polite converſation;

but

but either out of ignorance or malice, never enriched him with one idea to diſtinguiſh him from an idiot.—Thus Sir Patrick Puff became a pretty gentleman, was admired by ſeveral pretty ladies, and rode about the country on a pretty mare, followed by two pretty negro boys, with French horns, which they blew very prettily.

Lady Fanfare, according to her expectation, was received at Vezhall with open arms. She had no need to relate her diſaſtrous tale; for Sir Patrick having himſelf been one of the maſkers, had come home full charged, and delighted his dear mamma,

ma with a copious detail of the matter. They both joined their voices with their gueſt in invectives againſt Lord Fanfare;—Sir Patrick declaring particularly, that, to his knowledge, Mr Woodville had behaved no otherwiſe than a gentleman ought.

Lady Fanfare, taking advantage of this, threw out that evening ſo many artful inſinuations of Woodville's merit and accompliſhments, that the wiſe knight, at ſupper, declared his purpoſe of taking a ride next day, and bringing Mr Woodville to dine with him: a declaration highly delightful to Lady Fanfare, and not indifferent even

even to the venerable dame Puff, who, though ſtricken in years, was not yet dead to the ſenſe of maſculine merit.

CHAP. XVIII.

TAE KNIGHT GOES A BOOTLESS ERRAND.

ATTENDED by the good wiſhes of theſe worthy ladies, Sir Patrick took his way, next morning after breakfaſt, and ſafely arrived in Woodville's yard; where, with infinite ſelf-importance, he drew up his blacks, and made them ſound a hunter's call.

The noiſe of this performance alarmed

alarmed two wanton young fillies, then ſtanding looſe in the ſtable; which, ruſhing forth at the gallop, paſſed right under the noſe of Sir Patrick's mare, and ſtartled her ſo much, that ſhe immediately began to perform a great many cabrioles and croupades, to the infinite diverſion of Woodville's maids, who had come to the door to behold this extraordinary exhibition.

As the devil, too, would have it, Col. Whynyard was then driving by with Lady Louiſa Fanfare in his Phaeton. Hearing the French-horns, and ſeeing a perſon on horſeback jumping about, as it were to the muſic, they

thought it was ſome travelling leaper or poſture-maſter, and drove up to the ſcene of action. Sir Patrick exerted all the horſemanſhip he was maſter of in vain. The malicious jade bore him by little and little to the end of the ſtable; where, with a ſudden jerk, ſhe laid him fairly in the fatteſt part of the dunghill.

Woodville's maids then ran into the houſe, with loud burſts of laughter, to tell their maſter what had happened. But he, ſly rogue, from the window of his cloſet, had ſeen it all; and now coming forth, went, with many bows and ſcrapes, to help the unhorſed

unhorſed knight. The knight no ſooner got on his legs, than he made a motion of paying his reſpects to Lady Louiſa; but ſhe, not chooſing to receive his complimentary incenſe in his preſent condition, begged the Colonel to drive off; who obeyed, after calling to Woodville to have the gentleman ſcoured with ſoap and ſand.

The horns were ſounding all this time with the moſt phlegmatic compoſure; and only deſiſted upon being ordered by their maſter to go in queſt of the runaway mare.

The maids being then called, came

tittering and ſmothering their laughter; and Sir Patrick got his boots pulled off, while Woodville brought him a pair of ſlippers. The maids then ſet themſelves to rub him down, and ſcrape his jerkin and breeches: but Woodville deſired him rather to ſtrip, offering to lend him freſh cloaths; upon which, leaving all his unclean robes without, he hopped into the parlour. There being comforted with ſome cordials, he dreſſed, and chatted away as if nothing had happened.

Seeing a Delphini Ovid on the table, which Woodville had been reading while he ſat at breakfaſt,—

This

This is Ovid, quoth he, or Ovidius, which is the same thing;—I know it very well. Ah, Mr Woodville, you are a devilish bookish fellow!——If I had read half as much as you, I am sure I could have written a book myself.

Why, Sir Patrick, said Woodville, reading is not necessary to the perfection of some spirits. Your wit is already sufficiently brilliant;—much poring on books might have spoiled it.

Ay, faith, quoth the knight, there may be sense in that.——Yet, Sir, I

was actually a year at college: but I had no time for my ſtudies, that is certain; for when I ſhould have been reading Virgil and Corderius, and Euclid and Element, and ſuch like authers, I was playing at ſhuttle-cock with Miſs Racket—ha, ha, ha!—But now, Mr Woodville, will you be ſo obliging as to do me the favour to take a ride with me to Vezhall, and eat a bit of mutton. It's a fine day—and Lady Fanfare is there, man——as I am a gentleman, a moſt agreeable perſon! and a perſon of good ſenſe! She has been damnably uſed on your account, Mr Woodville;—but not-

with

withſtanding, you have her good word, I can tell you.

Woodville agreed to ride out with him; and having got his horſe ſaddled by the time Sir Patrick's boots were cleaned, they mounted, and rode off together.

I have not been able to learn any ſatisfactory account of their converſation on the road. I conjecture it was ſparing on Woodville's part, till they came to Vezhall gate, when he made the knight a bow, and rode on.

What

What the devil, cried the knight, don't you dine with us?

Woodville. Excuse me, Sir Patrick, I have an invitation from Lady Violet: I dine at Valombrosa.

Sir Patrick. 'Sblood, man, you cannot be excus'd.——I engaged myself to Lady Fanfare to bring you. She'll fret like a cracked fiddle-string.

Woodville. Give my service to the Lady——Good day, Sir Patrick.

He gallopped off;—and Sir Patrick,

trick, with his horns ſounding, rode ſlow in ſtate down the avenue. The ladies (eſpecially the peereſs) were highly dreſſed out for the reception of Woodville; and therefore received Sir Patrick very coldly when he appeared alone. He aſſured them ſtrongly, that Mr Woodville was pre-engaged: in which, however, he happened to be miſtaken.—— Woodville, in fact, had no engagement at Valombroſa: but he plainly ſaw that Lady Fanfare had ſent out this wittol knight as a decoy to draw him into her company; and he was too ſenſible of the danger of that ſnare. He therefore proceeded to Va-

Valombrosa; where he made his sister very merry with the woful adventure of the dunghill.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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VELINA:

A

POETICAL FRAGMENT.

Sæpe manus demens, ſtudiis irata malignis,
Miſit in arſuros carmina noſtra focos.
Atque ita de multis, quoniam non multa ſuperſunt,
Cum venia facito, quiſquis es, iſta legas. OVID.

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MARIA;

OR, THE

GENEROUS RUSTIC.

O may we never love as theſe have lov'd!

PERR.

VELINA:

A

POETICAL FRAGMENT.

MARIA:

OR THE

GENEROUS RUSTIC.